

California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley

Report on the **Economic Development and Higher Education & Workforce Development Work Groups**

December 9, 2005

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The Work Groups has held two sessions to identify outcomes, identify current assets and develop initial actions in six areas:

- Economic Competitiveness and Workforce Development in Target Industries
- Regional Planning for Health Care Training
- Student Access and Degree Attainment in Baccalaureate Education
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Renewable Energy as Economic Opportunity
- Infrastructure and Incentive Programs

I. Economic Competitiveness and Workforce Development

- Outcomes:
 - Increase employment in target industries
 - Narrow the gap between region and state unemployment
- Actions:
 - Adopt the target industry cluster approach to education and training
 - Common mechanism to gathering workforce demand in target industries
 - Prioritize and focus on high demand occupations in target industries
 - Change state funding formulas to support high demand occupations
 - Consider combining WIBs for greater impact and economies of scale

II. Regional Planning for Health

- Outcomes:
 - Regional, strategic, long term plan for health careers education
 - Adequate supply of culturally diverse faculty pool
 - Coordinated clinical placement system
- Actions:
 - Workforce needs assessment for the Central Valley
 - Increase state funding for health professional education
 - Higher faculty salaries competitive with the private sector

III. Student Access and Degree Attainment in Baccalaureate Education

- Outcome - Increase number of students in:
 - Pre-school
 - Exposed to career prep by 8th grade
 - Graduating from high school
 - Attend some postsecondary education or training
 - Graduating or transferring from community college
 - Graduating from college
- Actions:
 - Eliminate barriers and build incentives for transition across K-12, community colleges, colleges to create “seamless” education system
 - Create “continuous entry at all points and all ages for non-traditional pathways to a BA”
 - Integrate career pathways into all standards

IV. Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development

- Outcomes:
 - Increase the number of successful, fast growth businesses
 - More money available for new businesses
 - More intellectual property
- Actions:
 - Create “environmental technology investment fund” – assemble state and regional investment community to develop the fund headquartered in the San Joaquin Valley
 - Create a network of regional support for entrepreneurship linking and expanding existing programs (e.g. incubators, SBDCs, venture funds)
 - State matching of federal funds for SBDCs

V. Renewable Energy

- Outcomes:
 - Development of a renewal entrepreneur industry
 - Increased use of renewal energy in power production
- Actions:
 - Form a clean energy collaborative renewable energy investment
 - Adopt local policies supporting green buildings
 - Seed fund to start clean tech companies

VI. Infrastructure and Incentives Programs

- Outcomes:
 - Complete regional East/West highway corridors between 5&99
 - Adequate & sustainable water for all interests in the region
 - Establish a regional prevailing wage—process for waiver of prevailing wage for regional or local areas.
- Actions:
 - Majority vote for sales tax for transportation
 - Streamlining/expediting cooperative agreements with CalTrans allowing more local control (e.g. after the Northridge earthquake I-5 was rebuilt in remarkable speed – we should have the same flexibility on projects)
 - Include an economic impact component on the updated water quality plan to match requirements of target industries.
 - Examine prevailing wage patterns in the Central Valley and their impact on housing and transportation – suggested steps:
 - Identify which crafts' prevailing wages are being tied to urban areas
 - Determine short- and long-term economic impact of prevailing wage
 - Based on the outcomes of the first two steps, seek administrative or legislative relief for economically distressed areas

VII. Additional Progress – Workforce Innovation and Regional Economic Development (WIRED) grant

- **Department of Labor program** – could provide \$5 million a year for three years
- **Purpose:** Integrate economic development, workforce development and K-12; help participating regions “move to the next level of system innovation and transformation by providing funding, technical assistance and access to a cadre of experts.”
- **Background:** Partnership between Department of Labor and Department of Commerce. Influenced by the National Innovation Agenda from the Council on Competitiveness.
- **Process** – each state will advance up to three applications to the Department of Labor. Application to the state is due 12/12. The state will notify the regions of their selection by 12/15. Applications must be postmarked by December 31, 2005 (Governor's approval is required).
- **Selection Criteria:** (1) Strength of the Partnership (30 points), (2) Statement of Need (30 points), and (3) Strategies for System Transformation (40 points).
- **Application for the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley:**
 - Centered around three areas - (1) Talent, (2) Investment and (3) Innovation Infrastructure
 - **Need statements of support e-mailed to Ashley Swearengin at ashleys@csufresno.edu by Monday, December 12th at 12:00 p.m.**

VIII. Next Steps:

- Tentative date for next meeting: January 31st in Visalia
- February and March – begin drafting action plans